

# STORY OF THE WINDSOR HOTEL.

John T. Dailey, Its Builder,  
Committed Suicide Be-  
fore It Opened.

J. J. BELDEN BOUGHT IT.

Hawk & Wetherbee Ran It Til  
They Opened the Hotel  
Manhattan.

The history of the Windsor Hotel dates back to September, 1873, when Messrs. Hawk & Wetherbee, of the present Hotel Manhattan, threw open to the public what

The hotel was built by John T. Dalley, a

wealthy manufacturer of hardware and inventor of the Dailey diamond rock drill. The hotel venture proved his business Waterloo and, disheartened by his losses and inability to meet his obligations, he com-

The Goeler estate owned the land, and Dailley had a twenty-one years' leasehold.

This leasehold and the hotel itself were juggled around the courts for about ten years, until the mortgagees foreclosed and the property was bought in by James J.

Belden, of Syracuse, for about \$475,000. This was considered a very small figure for the plant, which was intended to have cost \$600,000, but in alterations to plans made subsequent to the laying of the foundation

had cost tally \$200,000 more. It was this latter expenditure that had ruined Bailey as he had made no provision in his financial plans for an increased cost.

The rent of the building for the first ten years was \$135,000 a year, a sum which the proprietors felt to be fair and reasonable at the time. In 1883, however, new

and more modern hotels began to arise, and the Windsor lost its prestige as the finest hotel of the city. It has always been considered one of the best kept and most homelike. From 1883 to 1894 the rental

was \$90,000 a year. In 1894, the ground lease having run out, and the Goelet executors having refused to renew it, the property was bought in by the estate and a yearly lease given to Messrs. Hawk & Wetherill, who still retained the property.

Wetherbee, who still retained the management, though two changes had been made in the firm, the original Samuel Hawk having died in 1882 and his nephew, William S. Hawk, taken his place, and A. L. Walter, father of the famous "People's Char-

Messrs. Hawk & Wetherbee remained a tenants of the Goelet estate for two years but then, unable to pay an increased rent

and having had built for them, by the former landlord, James J. Belden, a new hotel, they gave up the Windsor in May, 1896, and became the proprietors of the Hotel Manhattan, Madison avenue and

Warren F. Leland, of the famous fam<sup>y</sup> of hotel keepers, took the old Windsor at that time and decided that despite the increased rent it could be made to pay. H

had given up his Chicago house, the Chicago Beach Hotel, built at the time of the World's Fair, and came to New York with about \$300,000 of profits from his Chicago experience. Of this amount he spent \$150,000 in real estate, maintaining a splendid

thoroughly overhauling the exterior of the building, but it appears that nothing was done toward making the house even partly fireproof.

The Building Department was aware of the unsafe condition of the hotel, and the and the Fire Department had had man

In 1888 the building was condemned. The proprietors had placed a water tank, holding 8,000 gallons, over the air well tank, lighted the office, and the weight had caused the walls to warp. Nothing was

A feature of the new management of the hotel was the collection of modern pain-

A circumstance not known to the general public was the existence of a tunnel leading from the hotel, under Forty-seventh street, to the house of Jay Gould. The

was built at Mr. Gould's expense after the riot caused by his withholding the return of the Blue-Cleveland election. At that time Mr. Gould escaped from his house in a closed carriage, unnoticed by the rioters, and sent soldiers to pick Mr. Joffe up.

The hotel was built on a lot used in the old days as a skating pond by residents of the neighborhood.

## CHIEF ENGINEER'S STORY OF THE FIRE

He Saw Many Women Fall from High  
Stories to the Court in the

Rear.

Fred Corbett, the chief engineer of the building, tells the following story:

"The engine room was under the building on the Forty-sixth street side. When the fire broke out I was there with my first assistant, Robert Walker, and twenty

dremen. We heard the crackling of the flames in the court, and Walker and I ran out. We saw that the whole fourth floor was on fire. There were three engines

and three boilers in the basement. There were fires in all the boilers and the steam pressure was about 120 pounds. We ran back, drew the fires and opened the cocks connecting with the reservoir on the roof.

In order to flood the cellar. While we were doing this Mr. Leland rushed in and told us to turn off the electric connections so that none of the firemen might be shocked. This also was done, and we a-

"We saw three women sliding down the ropes. They would come all right for a couple of stories and then let go. All of them fell a distance of two or three stories."

We picked them up and carried them to the street, where they were put in ambulances. When we went out again I think there must have been fifty or seventy-five women sliding down the ropes. On some of them I saw a rope as they slipped down.

ropes there were two or three women, and when one would fall she would knock others off. I helped several to the bathhouse at Nos. 5, 7 and 9 West Forty-sixth street. Pretty soon it got too hot for me and we had to leave. I am afraid that

several women lost their lives in the rear of the building—that is, in the courtyard.

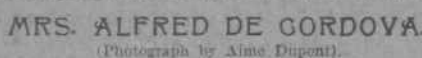
If a man giving the name of August Fuller called out a promise, he made in the excitement it was

have been a lucky fire for Policeman Simerline, the East Fifty-ninth Street Station. Mr. Fullerton stood on the sidewalk and offered \$1,000 to anyone who would rescue his wife. Simerline volunteered, although he specified that he was not doing it for the money. Learning the location of the woman,

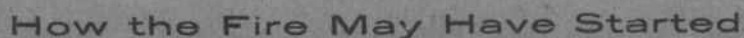
room, he went to the roof on a fire escape, made his way to the room, got the woman and carried her to safety down a ladder at the Forty-seventh street side of the building.

WARREN F. LELAND.  
The manager of the ill-fated Windsor Hotel

is the story told at the Waldorf last night. Colonel Oehlthre lost all his clothing, jewelry and several thousand dollars' worth of art treasures.



DO the "Want" ads. in the  
YOU Sunday Journal? Why not?  
READ \$200 in prizes every week  
for finding the Maxine. See  
"Want" pages in to-morrow's Sun-  
day Journal.



According to the story of a waiter, a guest in the hotel threw away a lighted match which set fire to some lace curtains and caused the awful loss of life.